



March 2, 2010

Dear Kitchen Cabinet members,

On Saturday, we voted on the Senate operating budget, which includes millions of dollars in new taxes and tax increases. As expected, the majority party chose not to include most Republican ideas, and as a result I voted against the budget. **I believe that raising taxes while working families and businesses are struggling to make ends meet is simply the wrong approach.** State government must stop doing business as usual and start looking at more efficient, tax-friendly ways to operate before I would even consider voting for tax increases. Below are several examples of how your tax dollars are being wasted while the majority party wants you to pay more.

Senate operating budget proposal passes in the dark of night

I've listed some of the many areas of the Senate operating budget which passed 25-19 on Saturday that I find to be wasteful. **These are excellent examples of malfeasance in the budgeting process.**

OUT-OF-STATE ART

One amendment in the proposed budget would remove the requirement that the Arts Commission only give grants to in-state artists. **So not only is the law still applicable that one-half of one percent of the total cost of all new public buildings be spent on art, now those artists don't even have to be located in**

Washington State. As an example, the state is currently building a 300-million dollar building just off the freeway in Olympia and will be required by law to spend \$1.5 million of that cost on sculptures and paintings. Now your taxes will be raised and the money won't even have to be spent locally.



MCNEIL ISLAND CLOSURE



[Senate Bill 6444](#) (the budget), as passed, will close the McNeil Island correctional facility for good. However it would keep the Special Commitment Center open and cost taxpayers more money to keep the ferries running to and from the island. It was even suggested that the sex predators housed at SCC could be trained to pilot the ferry boats shuttling families and staff to and from the island, which I believe is an absolutely ludicrous idea and an unacceptable public safety risk.

A SELF-CONGRATULATORY PAT ON THE BACK

Another amendment in the Senate budget proposal requires all state agencies with more than 300 full-time employees to apply for the Washington State Quality Award, which recognizes the best practices and identifies improvement opportunities. **How much taxpayer time and money will be wasted by each agency applying for this award?**



WEA RAID ON PUBLIC FUNDS

Here's an interesting amendment. If you look at the [tax returns for the Washington Education Association from 2004-2008](#), you'll see an increasing dollar amount left over in its Rate Stabilization Reserve Trust account (it's the number in the lower-right corner of each page). One of my colleagues had an amendment which would have required that money not spent at the end of each year be used to defray the cost to local school districts of health and other employee benefits. Other entities that receive state funds are required to return any unused funds to the state. **The amendment was not adopted, which begs the question, what else is the WEA using that money for?**

HIGHER INSPECTION FEES

Another amendment which passed would give the Department of Health the authority to create a new fee related to the inspection of temporary farmworker housing. This is just one example of many fee increases found in the operating budget proposal.

RESTAURANT PROTECTION AMENDMENT NOT EVEN CONSIDERED

This amendment would have exempted bulk liquor sales to restaurants from having to pay tax. That provision would surely have helped these small businesses, but the amendment was declared by the committee chair to be beyond the scope and object of the bill. **I've never seen that happen in Ways and Means in the entire time I've served on that committee.** This amendment would have

been a small way for the state to help struggling businesses keep their doors open, and it was dismissed before even being considered.

MORE SPENDING



In the operating budget proposal, \$150 thousand dollars are appropriated to fund yet another program to promote early literacy. I support helping kids learn how to read at an early age, but when the state's facing a \$2.8 billion dollar budget deficit, maybe this isn't an appropriate time to be creating new taxpayer-funded programs.

CHANGING TANF TO "PANF"

Another of my colleagues offered an amendment to the budget which would have required individuals using the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) cash assistance program only be allowed to take advantage of it for five years. The provision would not have included recipients who are disabled, adult caregivers or parents of infants. The amendment would have saved the state tens of millions of dollars, part of which would have then been spent on schools instead. The majority party chose not to adopt the amendment. **Perhaps it would be more appropriate if we changed the acronym TANF to PANF...the Permanent Assistance for Needy Families program.**

RAISING FEES FOR ADULT FAMILY HOME PROVIDERS

This amendment adopted by the majority party raises the initial license fee for adult family home providers from \$1,187 per home to \$1,600. It would also charge providers an annual fee of \$190 per bed. The maximum number of beds allowed in an adult family home is six, so providers who were paying nearly \$1,200 will see their costs jump to \$2,740...about a 250% increase.



PROTECTING THE OCEAN FROM FIRE

Another amendment would levy a new 29-cents-per-acre property tax on land – *including tidal zones* – for fire protection. **When's the last time you heard about the land between high-tide and low-tide catching fire?** My guess is not ever in the history of land, fire and tides.

THE ONE MILLION DOLLAR GHOST BILL

The last amendment I'll share with you would channel a million of your tax dollars to the Department of Social and Health Services "pursuant to SB xxxx." I've been in the Legislature for 15

years and have never seen an amendment adopted that leaves the enacting bill blank. **In fact, I'd be willing to bet that there has never been an amendment with a reference to bills that don't exist.** After making the point that we were not about to adopt an amendment with a reference to a "ghost" bill, the majority simply deleted the offending reference before passing the amendment.

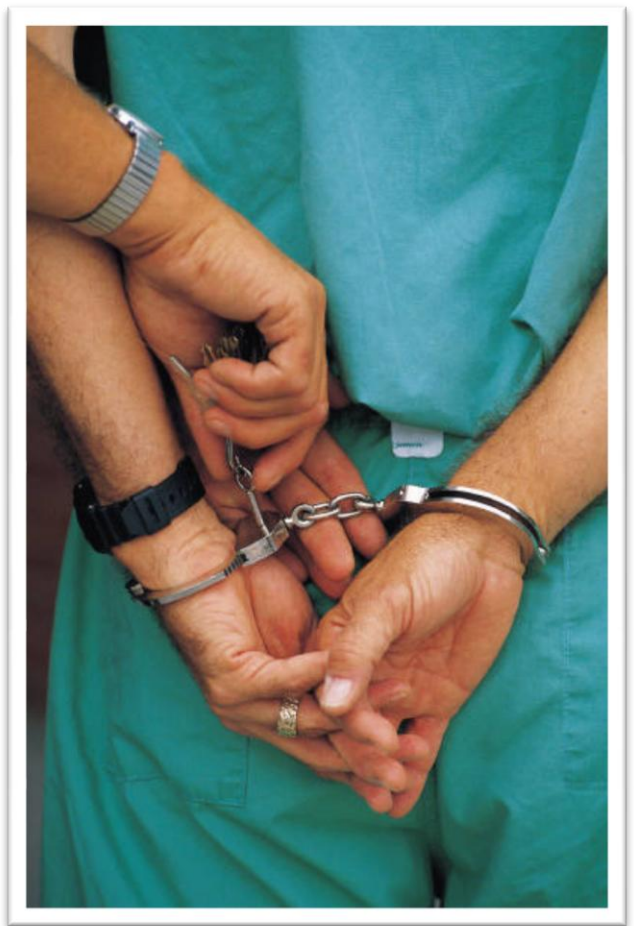
Constitutional amendment restricting bail moves forward

NEWS FLASH!

Nonpartisan committee staff has just today announced the findings of their independent analysis of the two versions of this constitutional amendment. The result is that the version which includes my amendment is in fact more extensive in its treatment of individuals charged with certain crimes.

Comparison by nonpartisan staff shows that there are zero areas in the original not covered in the version before the Senate. However staff also found there are 15 additional crimes covered in the amended version that were not in the original House version. The original version of this measure wouldn't cover three-strike-eligible crimes if it's the first or second strike, and covered only class-A felonies including property crimes where no one is harmed. Now it covers two- and three-strike crimes, as well as numerous class-B felonies such as solicitation, conspiracy and others.

All along, this has been about protecting the public and the law enforcement community, and doing it in a tailored way that focuses on crimes against individuals, not crimes against property. We have been very deliberate in how we moved this bill forward, incrementally improving it to the point where independent staff agrees that it is the most comprehensive version proposed this session.



Here is the sequence of events leading up to today's finding:

1. I introduced my original measure, which was very similar to the House version.
2. In the Senate Judiciary Committee, my resolution was narrowed to add a new section.
3. The measure then passed the full Senate 43-4.
4. My version is killed by the House Public Safety Committee.
5. On the last day for bills to be heard in the Senate, the House version had its language ripped out and replaced with my amendment in the Senate Judiciary Committee.
6. During that committee, I had a last minute amendment to my amended version of the House resolution which further broadened its coverage.
7. The measure was approved by the committee and referred to Rules, where it was placed on the floor calendar to be brought up for a vote.
8. Nonpartisan committee staff completes an analysis of the two versions and find the version with my amendment to be the more comprehensive of the two.

[House Joint Resolution 4220](#) with my language is the only version left alive at this point and the bill is likely to pass the Senate this week and go to the House for concurrence.

Constitutional amendments also need to come with a separate bill to implement them. It's called the "trailer" bill and you can think of some of the language in the constitutional amendment proposal like a ball and hitch. In order for a truck to tow a trailer, you need a ball and hitch to connect them. I proposed that bill today and it should address all concerns. That gives a task force which will study the issue between now and then enough time to suggest a more permanent trailer bill.

HJR 4220 is now more of a "hook-and-line" approach to this issue, rather than a "drift net" approach which the House proposed originally. **The law enforcement community is comfortable with this version and I look forward to seeing it pass the Senate.** I'll keep you updated on its status.

The status of my bills

[HJR 4220](#) - Constitutional amendment restricting bail

Though it is not my bill, it is my language contained within. It would amend the state Constitution so that individuals who meet certain conditions are not bailable.

- *PASSED THE HOUSE 80-17 ON FEB. 5*
- *AMENDED BY SENATE JUDICIARY TO CONTAIN MY LANGUAGE ON FEB. 26*
- *WILL BE VOTED ON BY THE SENATE THIS WEEK*

SB 6308 - Computer access at SCC

Prohibits any person committed or detained at the SCC from accessing a personal computer unless the resident's treatment plan states that such access is necessary. I've asked our state Representatives Green (green.tami@leg.wa.gov, 360-786-7958) and Kelley (kelley.troy@leg.wa.gov, 360-786-7890), who both serve on the [House Rules committee](#), for their help and support. **If you, too, care about this issue, please call and ask them to bring this bill to the floor for a vote.**

- *HEARD IN HUMAN SERVICES AND CORRECTIONS JAN. 28*
- *APPROVED BY HUMAN SERVICES AND CORRECTIONS FEB. 2*
- *PASSED THE SENATE 47-0 FEB. 16*
- *APPROVED BY HOUSE PUBLIC SAFETY ON FEB. 23*
- *AWAITING FULL VOTE OF THE HOUSE*

SB 6316 - Coordination between local law enforcement and DOC

Requires notification of DOC when an inmate, housed in any city or county jail and under supervision by the department, escapes or is released, provides local law enforcement real-time access to the statewide corrections database, and allows local law enforcement to detain offenders in violation of their conditions of release with or without an arrest warrant having been issued.

- *PASSED THE SENATE 46-0 ON FEB. 11*
- *APPROVED BY HOUSE HUMAN SERVICES FEB. 22*
- *AWAITING APPROVAL BY HOUSE GENERAL GOV'T APPROPRIATIONS*

In closing...

If you know someone in our district who might be interested in receiving these updates, please feel free to forward this e-mail to him or her. You can always find information online by visiting my website at www.SenateRepublicans.wa.gov/Carrell.



As always, if you'd like to contact me you can write, phone, e-mail, or stop by my Olympia office. I look forward to your comments and suggestions because they help me better represent you. My office phone number is (360) 786-7654, and my home phone number is (253) 581-2859. Or you can write me at **102 Irv Newhouse Building, P.O. Box 40428, Olympia, WA 98504-0428.**

- Legislative E-mail address: carrell.mike@leg.wa.gov
- Home E-mail address: mcarrell@hotmail.com

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike". The letters are cursive and fluid, with a small dot above the 'i'.

Mike Carrell

28th District State Senator